



Georgia Secretary of State

ELECTIONS DIVISION

Implementing NVRA

Agencies

v.1 2010



Georgia Secretary of State
Elections Division

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ELECTION CONNECTION
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PREFACE

Implementing NVRA in Designated Agencies is to be used as a guide for the administration of voter registration conducted by Georgia Agencies under the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA).

This manual is not intended to be used as a substitute for the Georgia Constitution, relevant statutes, or applicable case law. Whenever there is a question regarding the interpretation of information contained in this guide, or of a particular section of the Election Code, or any other statute, the user should contact competent legal counsel or the Office of the Secretary of State, Elections Division.

GEORGIA SECRETARY OF STATE

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Introduction to NVRA

Background

In 1993, Congress passed the National Voter Registration (NVRA). In 1994, Georgia passed legislation to implement the NVRA, to be effective January 1, 1995.

Intent of the Law

The main intent of the NVRA is to encourage voter registration by providing new and innovative ways to register to vote. With NVRA, several new types of voter registration were added to the registration opportunities already provided under Georgia law which included:

- Mail registration
- Registration at offices where driver's licenses and identification cards are issued
- Registration at offices where persons apply for public assistance or which administer programs for the disabled, such as Food Stamps and Rehabilitation Services
- Registration at county and municipal registrar offices
- Registration at public libraries

Role of the Secretary of State's Office

The NVRA requires that each state designate a chief election official to be responsible for coordination of the state responsibilities under this act. The Secretary of State has been named the chief election official for Georgia.

Under state law, the Secretary of State is charged with establishing and maintaining a statewide voter registration system. The system must be capable of meeting federal requirements for maintaining lists of eligible active voters and those voters considered inactive. The Secretary of State is responsible for overseeing statewide list maintenance activities and functions required under federal and state laws. These relate to updating voter information and removing ineligible persons from the voter lists.

Voter Registration in Georgia

To be eligible to register to vote, a person must:

- Be a citizen of the United States and a legal resident of Georgia
- Be at least 17 1/2 years of age (at least 18 years of age to vote).
- Not be serving a sentence for a conviction of a felony involving moral turpitude
- Not have been judicially declared to be mentally incompetent

Register to vote at the following Georgia locations:

- County and municipal registrar's office and other fixed voter registration sites
- Driver's license branch office (Department of Public Safety)
- Public Assistance offices which offer the following:
 - Food Stamp program
 - Medicaid program
 - Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program
 - Aid to families with Dependent Children program
- Public Libraries
- Department of Labor – Rehabilitation and other offices which provide state-funded programs primarily engaged in providing services to persons with disabilities
- Recruitment offices of the Armed Forces

Registering to Vote at a Designated Agency

Persons can register to vote when applying for or renewing services or changing name or address at an agency. Agency personnel are required to:

- Offer the opportunity to register to vote each time an applicant applies for or renews services (including change of name or address).
- Assist applicants in completing the voter registration application when assistance is requested.
- Accept completed voter registration applications and mail them to the Secretary of State's office.
- Provide the same degree of assistance to each applicant in completing the voter registration application as the agency provides to an applicant in completing its own forms.

The Registration Paperwork

Two forms are used when assisting applicants with voter registration:

Georgia Voter Registration Application (Appendix "A")

This is an official application used to determine voter eligibility. Forms should be completed by the applicant as accurately as possible to ensure timely processing. The agency is responsible only for making sure that the application is complete. The agency is not responsible for making sure that the information is correct.

Declaration Statement (Appendix "B")

This form documents that the applicant was offered an opportunity to register to vote when applying for, renewing, or updating services. These forms are legally required to be kept on file by the agency for a period of not less than 24 months.

Assisting the Applicant

Offer the applicant the DECLARATION STATEMENT with the following question:

"If you are not registered to vote where you live now, would you like to apply to register to vote here today?"

If the answer is "No":

Ask the applicant to fill out the declaration statement indicating that he or she does not wish to register to vote. Have the applicant check an answer to the question and sign the form. Retain the declaration statement as a record of declination. If the patron fails to indicate on the

form whether he or she wants to register to vote, the applicant is considered to have declined to register to vote.

If the answer is “Yes”:

Ask the applicant to fill out the declaration statement indicating that he or she wishes to register to vote. Retain the declaration statement as a record of acceptance.

Georgia law requires that all applicants be asked if they are a U.S. citizen should they express the desire to register to vote. Offer the voter registration application with the following question:

“Are you a United States citizen?”

If the answer is “No”:

If they are not a U.S. citizen, the process stops at that time and this is counted as a declination for recording purposes. Complete the declaration statement with the person’s name, the date, and a notation in the comments section that the person is not a U S citizen.

If the answer is “Yes”:

Offer the applicant the **VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATION (Appendix “A”)**

The form should be filled out by the applicant. If the applicant is physically disabled or illiterate, he or she may request physical assistance in filling out the form. The applicant **MUST** make his or her mark or sign with an “X” on the signature line. If the agency representative assists the applicant in completing any written portion of the voter registration application, the agency representative **MUST** also sign the form.

Conversations with Applicants

Conversations with applicants should be handled with sensitivity. When a agency offers applicants the opportunity to register to vote, agency personnel **must not**:

- Try to influence an applicant's political preference or party affiliation.
- Display any political preference or party allegiance.
- Make any statement or take any action which would discourage an applicant from registering to vote.
- Make any statement or take any action which would lead an applicant to believe that registering to vote has any bearing on receiving services from the agency.

Submitting Applications to the Secretary of State

To ensure timely processing of applications, completed voter registration applications must be mailed to the Secretary of State's office as follows:

AGENCIES ARE REQUIRED TO MAIL ANY COMPLETED VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATIONS WEEKLY. THE EXCEPTION TO THIS RULE IS DURING THE 15 DAYS PRIOR TO ANY REGISTRATION DEADLINE WHEN SUBMITTAL OF ANY COMPLETED APPLICATIONS TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE ELECTIONS OFFICE MUST BE MADE DAILY. Election calendars can be found at: www.sos.ga.gov/electionconnection/

Note: If you do not have any completed applications, you do not need to submit anything to the Secretary of State's office.

Mail the applications in the pre-paid envelope provided by the Secretary of State's office. You may either include a daily recap sheet (or similar agency identifying sheet) with your submittal, or you may print or stamp the following on the pre-paid envelope:

Supervisor and Facility Name
Address
Phone Number

Agency Paperwork

Declaration Statements (Appendix B)

You must keep declaration statements for 24 months. Keep a monthly file. Use this file exclusively for declaration statements. Do not keep these declaration statements in client files.

The Secretary of State's office recommends setting up a file containing 25 folders. Create one folder for each of the 24 months. At the end of the 25th month, destroy the contents of the first folder and create a new folder for the next month.

Daily Recaps (Appendix C)

Each agency shall maintain statistical records on the number of registrations and declinations. A Daily Recap Form may be used for this purpose and is available for download at Election Connection at www.sos.ga.gov/electionconnection/

Ordering Materials

You should keep a two-week supply of applications, envelopes, and forms. Supplies can be ordered and/or downloaded from the Secretary of State agency portal at: www.sos.ga.gov/electionconnection/.

Handling Questions

Agency representatives and applicants will have questions about this process. Typical questions are listed below.

Q: What if the applicant wants to take the application and mail it later?

A: The applicant may take the application, complete it, and mail it later. This counts as a declination for record keeping purposes.

Q: What if the applicant refuses to provide responses to any of the questions on the voter registration application?

A: Continue processing the application. The county registrar will obtain missing information later.

Q: What if the applicant refuses to sign the voter registration application?

A: This counts as a declination. Ask the applicant to fill out a declaration statement indicating that he or she does not wish to register to vote. Mark box 3 on the original declaration statement signed by the applicant. Make a notation in the Comments section of "refused to sign." Retain the declaration statement as a record of declination. Mail the incomplete application to the Secretary of State's office with the completed applications.

Q: What are the requirements for being able to register to vote?

A: The requirements are listed on the voter registration application. To register to vote, a person must:

- Be a citizen of the United States and a legal resident of Georgia.
- Be at least 17 1/2 years of age (at least 18 years of age to vote).
- Not be serving a sentence for a conviction of a felony involving moral turpitude.
- Have not been found mentally incompetent by a judge.

Q: What if an applicant wants an application for a spouse or family member who is not at the agency, or is not requesting agency's services?

A: Give the applicant a voter registration application to give to the individual.

Q: What if an applicant asks questions about election dates or polling locations?

A: Refer the applicant to the telephone number listed on the application.

Q: Does an applicant have to register to vote again when he or she moves?

A: Yes. When a person moves to another county, he or she must register in the new county at least 30 days before an election to be eligible to vote.

If a person moves within the same county, he or she must complete a change of address notification. Persons can use the voter registration application form, or they can send in their current precinct card with the changes. In any case, a person must change his or her address at least 30 days before an election for the change to be effective for that particular election.

Q: What if an applicant wants to register at an address other than his residence?

A: The applicant must register using his or her residence address; the mailing address can be different.

Q: What if an applicant is moving in a few weeks and wants to register using the new address?

A: The applicant must register using his or her current address. After the applicant moves, he or she can complete the “change of address” portion on a voter registration application and submit it to the county registrar.

Q: What if an applicant is not sure he or she is eligible to register to vote?

A: Refer the applicant to the telephone number listed on the application.

Q: What if an applicant is homeless and does not have a residence address?

A: The applicant should use the physical address which he or she considers his or her home (for example, 1-20 West under bridge at exit 142). The mailing address should be wherever the applicant could pick up mail (for example, a homeless shelter or friend's home). The applicant should also include a drawing of where he or she resides with the application.

Q: Will an applicant have to re-register each year?

A: No. If a person is already registered, it is not necessary to register again unless he or she moves or has a change of name.

Q: Why does an applicant have to provide a driver's license number or the last 4 digits of their Social Security number?

A: These numbers are used to distinguish between voters with similar names and to cross reference voters with identifying information.

Q: If an applicant registers to vote, will the voter registration list be used for other purposes?

A: Yes. However, Social Security number, date of birth, driver's license number, and the location where a person registers to vote are confidential. The remaining voter registration information kept on file with the registrars is public record. Voter registration lists may be used to compile lists of registered voters for use by persons seeking political office, or to check that persons signing petitions are registered voters. Some counties use the voter registration list as one of their sources for compiling a jury list. Voter registration lists may not be used by any person for commercial purposes.

Getting Help

The Secretary of State's office is available to provide support and assistance.

Please contact us at:

Secretary of State Elections Division
Suite 1104 West Tower
2 Martin Luther King, Jr., Drive, S.E.
Atlanta, Georgia 30334
Phone: (404) 656-2871
Email: gaelections@sos.ga.gov

Election Connection
www.sos.ga.gov/electionconnection/



Voter Registration Supplies

- [Designated Agency Online Ordering](#)
- [Application for Voter Registration \(printable version\)](#)
- [Declaration Statement DS-2007 \(printable version\)](#)
- [Agency Daily Recap Reporting form ATF-08 \(printable version\)](#)



Quick Access Information

- [Implementing NVRA in Agencies](#)
- [Reference Calendar](#)
- [County Board of Registrars Office](#)
- [Check Voter Registration Status](#)



Brochures and Flyers

- [Georgia ID Requirements Flyer](#)
- [Georgia ID Requirements Poster](#)
- [Photo ID Requirements for Voters Brochure](#)
- [I Registered to Vote - Now What??](#)
- [Georgia Photo Id College, University, and Technical College List](#)
- [Georgia Voter Information Guide Brochure](#)
- [Georgia Residents Register to Vote Here \(poster\)](#)



Training

Appendix A

COMPLETING A VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATION

To minimize any issues with registering to vote, you must complete all required fields on the voter registration application.

When completing a voter registration application, you are required to provide your driver's license number and/or SSN (9 digit SSN is optional, but the last 4 digits of your SSN are required).

If the applicant cannot sign his or her name for whatever reason, the applicant must still make his or her mark on the signature line. (Example:

Use only if already registered to vote, but an event requiring a Name Change or Change of Address has occurred.

If an applicant is illiterate or disabled and the applicant is being assisted in completing any part of the voter registration application, the person assisting must sign his or her name in the space provided.

STATE OF GEORGIA APPLICATION FOR VOTER REGISTRATION
Fill out the bottom half of this application by following these directions. Print clearly and use blue or black ink.

- LEGAL NAME.** Your full legal name including any suffix such as Sr., Jr., III, is required on this form.
- ADDRESS.** Provide residential address. This information is required.
- MAILING ADDRESS.** If mailing address is different from residential address, complete the mailing address section.
- PERSONAL INFORMATION.** A telephone number is helpful to registration officials if they have a question about your application. Gender and race are requested and are needed to comply with the Voting Rights Act of 1965, but are not mandated by law.
- VOTER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER.** Federal law requires you to provide your full GA Drivers License number or GA State issued ID number. If you do not have a GA Drivers License or GA ID you must provide the last 4 digits of your Social Security number. Providing your full Social Security number is optional. Your Social Security number will be kept confidential and may be used for comparison with other state agency databases for voter registration identification purposes. If you do not possess a GA Drivers License or Social Security number please check the appropriate box and a unique identifier will be provided for you.
- OATH.** Federal law requires that you answer the citizenship and age questions. Read the oath and sign your name. If you cannot complete this application unassisted because of physical disability or illiteracy, you must either sign or make your mark on the signature line, and the person assisting you MUST sign the signature space for person assisting voter.
- POLL OFFICER QUESTION.** Your willingness to be a poll worker will have no bearing on your application for registration.
- NAME/ADDRESS CHANGE.** Complete these sections to change the name or address of your current voter registration.
- MAP/DIAGRAM.** If you live in an area without house numbers and street names, please include a drawing of your location to assist us in locating your appropriate voting precinct.
- DELIVERY INSTRUCTIONS:** Verify that you have completed and signed the application. Enclose a copy of your ID if you are submitting this form by mail and registering for the first time in Georgia. Fold the application in half, remove the tape at the top, and press the edges together. The application is ready for you to mail (postage is prepaid) or deliver to your county voter registration office.
- You are NOT officially registered to vote until this application is approved.** You should receive a voter precinct card in the mail. If you do not receive this acknowledgement within two to four weeks after mailing this form, please contact your county voter registration office. You can find your poll location and other election information on the Secretary of State's website at www.sos.state.ga.us/elections.

REQUIREMENT: If you are submitting this form by mail and you are registering for the first time in Georgia, enclose a copy of one of the following with your application: A copy of a current and valid photo ID, a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document that shows your name and address. Those who are entitled to vote by absentee ballot under the Uniform and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act are exempt from this requirement.

Place copy of ID in pocket Trim copy of ID to size

COUNTY PRECINCT	MUNICIPAL PRECINCT	DISTRICT COMBO	REGISTRATION NO.	CHANGE OF ADDRESS	CHANGE OF NAME	OTHER
1. LAST NAME FIRST NAME MIDDLE OR MAIDEN NAME SUFFIX <input type="checkbox"/> Jr. <input type="checkbox"/> Sr. <input type="checkbox"/> III <input type="checkbox"/> IV <input type="checkbox"/> V			2. RESIDENCE ADDRESS: House No. and street name APT. NO. CITY COUNTY STATE GA. ZIP CODE			
3. MAILING ADDRESS (if different from residence address): Post-office box or route CITY STATE ZIP CODE			4. TELEPHONE NUMBER DATE OF BIRTH: MM/DD/YYYY GENDER Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> RACE/ETHNICITY: Black <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic/Latino <input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>			
5. MAILING DRIVER'S LICENSE OR GA ID NO. If no GA Driver's License or GA ID No., must provide last 4 digits of your Social Security Number FULL SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER (OPTIONAL) Last 4 Digits (Required) <input type="checkbox"/> Check if you do not have a GA Driver's License, GA ID No. or Social Security No.			6. I SWEAR OR AFFIRM THAT: (If answer is required under federal law) Are you a citizen of the United States of America? Check One: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Will you be 18 years of age on or before election day? Check One: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If you checked "No" in response to either of these questions, do not complete this form. I SWEAR OR AFFIRM THAT: I reside at the address listed above. I am eligible to vote in Georgia. I am not serving a sentence for having been convicted of a felony involving moral turpitude. I have not been judicially declared to be mentally incompetent.			
7. May we contact you about working as an Election Day poll officer? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If you would like to receive additional information by email, please provide your e-mail address:			CHANGE OF NAME: If you are changing your name, list the name under which you were previously registered. Last Name First Name Middle or Maiden Name CHANGE OF ADDRESS: If you are changing your address or if you were previously registered to vote, list your previous address. CITY COUNTY STATE			

WARNING: Any person who registers to vote knowing that such person does not possess the qualifications required by law, who registers under any name other than such person's own name, or who knowingly gives false information in registering shall be guilty of a felony. O.C.G.A. § 21-2-561

Signature of person helping illiterate or disabled voter

Military Active Duty? Yes ☐ No ☐

Appendix B

STATE OF GEORGIA AGENCY-BASED REGISTRATION APPLICATION

DECLARATION STATEMENT

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

IF YOU ARE NOT REGISTERED TO VOTE WHERE YOU LIVE NOW, WOULD YOU LIKE TO REGISTER TO VOTE HERE TODAY?

- 1) ☐ I want to register to vote.
- 2) ☐ I am already registered to vote.
- 3) ☐ I do not want to register to vote.

Applying to register or declining to register to vote will not affect the amount of assistance that you will be provided by this agency. IF YOU DO NOT CHECK ANY BOX, YOU WILL BE CONSIDERED TO HAVE DECIDED NOT TO REGISTER TO VOTE AT THIS TIME.

If you would like help in filling out the voter registration application form, we will help you. The decision whether to seek or accept help is yours. You may fill out the application in private.

If you believe that someone has interfered with your right to register or to decline to register to vote or your right in privacy in deciding whether to register or in applying to register to vote, you may file a complaint with the Secretary of State at 1104 West Tower, 2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, S. E., Atlanta, Georgia 30334 or by calling 404/656-2871.

If an applicant declines to register to vote, the declination shall be confidential and will be used only for voter registration purposes.

COMMENTS/REMARKS:

OFFICE USE ONLY

If an applicant refuses to sign the registration application, count as a declination and mark box 3 on this form. Note under comments: "Refused to sign application".

If box 2 or box 3 is checked, place form in declination file. Retain declinations for 24 months.

Appendix C

AGENCY RECAP FORM

FROM: AGENCY _____

ADDRESS: _____

Street

City

Zip

AGENCY CONTACT

AREA CODE/ TELEPHONE NUMBER

DATE	NUMBER OF DECLINATIONS TODAY	NUMBER OF COMPLETED VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATIONS

V.1 2009